



## CERTIFICATION - Connecticut Style

### Summer 2003 Newsletter

The Certification Division of the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control is pleased to present this first edition of a planned quarterly newsletter that will be published to inform the Connecticut Fire Service of pertinent and timely information concerning your fire service certification system.

The newsletter will be published in an electronic format only in recognition of today's computer technology and the widespread use of email and the Internet. This format will also allow us to provide nearly instant updates and transmittal of important information and will save significant resources that would be required should the newsletter be sent via postal mail.

Readers are asked to sign up for an eAlert for the newsletter that will send you an email when a new edition is published and will provide you with a direct link to the site. Please go to [www.ct.gov/cfpc/eAlerts/subscribe.asp](http://www.ct.gov/cfpc/eAlerts/subscribe.asp) to sign up for your eAlert. If you have previously subscribed for eAlerts you will be presented with a new checkbox to select titled "Certification Newsletter". If you have not previously subscribed to eAlerts you will be guided through that process.

### Station Evaluator Training

The Commission has recently established a requirement that, after January 1, 2004, all persons who serve as Practical Skills Station Evaluators must have attended a Commission sponsored Station Evaluator Training Program. This three hour program is offered free of charge to any Certified Fire Instructor who desires to serve as an Evaluator. Many training sessions have been previously conducted but to ensure an adequate pool of examiners additional programs will be held at the following locations:

<b>FAIRFIELD</b>	October 2, 2003	6:30 – 9:30 PM	Course# 04040304
<b>BURRVILLE</b>	September 19, 2003	9:00 AM– Noon	Course# 04040504
<b>WILLIMANTIC</b>	October 25, 2003	9:00 AM– Noon	Course# 04040604

<b>DERBY (GREAT HILL HOSE CO.)</b>	August 21, 2003	6:30 – 9:30 PM	Course# 04040104
<b>NEW HAVEN</b>	November 13, 2003	6:30 – 9:30 PM	Course# 04040704
<b>MIDDLESEX</b>	September 18, 2003	6:30 – 9:30 PM	Course# 04040204
<b>HARTFORD</b>	December 3, 2003	6:30 – 9:30 PM	Course# 04040804
<b>WOLCOTT</b>	October 8, 2003	6:30 – 9:30 PM	Course# 04040404
<b>MERIDEN</b>	September 30, 2003	9:00 AM– Noon	Course# 04040904

Unless otherwise noted, classes are conducted at the Regional Fire School listed.

Please contact your local Regional Fire School or submit a standard Connecticut Fire Academy course application for the course of your choice.

If you have additional questions, please contact Ed O’Hurley of the Commission staff for more information.

### **Scenario Based Practical Skills Evolutions**

1. The Commission has begun to offer more scenario based practical skills evaluations for the levels of Firefighter I and II. This type of testing method more closely tracks National Fire Protection Association Standard 1001 for Firefighter I and II that are now written using the Job Performance Requirement (JPR) format.

The scenario based evaluations combine a number of individual Job Performance Requirements that were previously tested as stand alone stations into a combine, cohesive, evolution that more accurately examines the tasks of a firefighter as they would be actually performed on the fireground. For example, instead of evaluation of separate stations to examine donning of PPE, raising ladders, stretching hoselines, and performing a rescue; these tasks may be combined into single scenario that would examine a candidates ability to don PPE, respond on an apparatus, raise a ladder, and perform a rescue while operating as a member of team in a single evolution.

This examination method is currently in the pilot phase but will begin to be used more extensively in the Fall. This type of evaluation also requires more extensive testing facilities. In the near future, specific equipment and facility requirements will be published to aid you in your selection of a testing location.

2. A new Day # 4 has been added to each of the Firefighter I and Firefighter II testing family. All skills covered in these new days can be found in the Firefighter I and Firefighter II Skill Sheet Booklet.

3. As testing is now being conducted in accordance with the Job Performance Requirements format of the Professional Qualifications Standards, please take the time to educate your students about the new format so they will be better prepared at the time of examinations. For more information about JPR's contact Ed O'Hurley at 860-627-6363, extension 223.

### **Release of scores/results**

Examination scores and/or test results are confidential information. As such, we believe it is important to respect the privacy and confidentiality of an individual's examination score or result. The Certification Division cannot and will not release the actual test score or pass/fail result of any candidate's practical or written examination to any person other than the candidate without that person's written permission to do so. This must include reporting if a person has passed for the purposes of internal promotions. If it will be necessary to be made aware of a candidate's examination result prior to the candidate receiving their written results, you must forecast that need and have the candidate sign a release or score/results form and submit that form prior to the exam being scores. The Certification Division can verify a person's certification status to any level however. Special arrangements may be made should a last moment job posting have precluded signing a Release of Scores form. Candidates should contact the Director of Certification at 860-627-6363, extension 225, for more information.

### **Application Deadlines/ Scheduling Deviation**

The following are reminders of the timeframes of some of our most frequently used processes:

- ❖ The Certification Division office must receive examination applications at least 10 days prior to the examination being requested.

(In some cases such as a Regional Fire School that conducts combined training to the Firefighter I and II levels and desires to have practical and written examinations conducted within a compressed timeframe that will not meet the application deadline, it is important to prearrange your needs with the Certification Registrar well in advance of the dates of your examinations so that appropriate accommodations can be made to fill your needs.)

- ❖ Requests to conduct either practical or written examinations must be submitted 4 – 6 weeks prior to the desired delivery.

### **Exam Date Verification**

When you receive your examination date verification back from the Certification Registrar please be sure that it indicates the date that was requested and on which you

expect the exam to be held. We have had situations that an error made on the original request and the exam date was scheduled that was different than was expected.

### **Exam Quotas**

Due to extremely heavy concentrations of examinations being conducted during the months of November, December, and January; and May, June, and July the processing time for results is being extended to the time limit allowed by Regulation. It may become necessary to limit the number of examinations conducted during those time periods to ensure timely processing of examinations conducted. If the number of examinations is limited, applications will be accepted on a first come, first serve basis. It is strongly recommended that any examination requests (practical or written) for those time periods be submitted as soon as possible. Combining examinations between two or more entities should also be considered as an increased number of candidates at a single location does not impact processing as much as the same number of persons at multiple sites.

### **Identification method changes**

In the near future, the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control will transition away from the use of Social Security Numbers as the method of identification for candidates for certification and for students taking part in Connecticut Fire Academy training programs. The new method will be the same as is currently in use by the Department of Public Safety Division of Fire, Emergency & Building Services and will consist of the 1<sup>st</sup> three (3) letters of an individual's last name and the last four (4) numbers of an individual's social security number.

### **Skills Evaluation Sheets Now Available on the Web**

The Commission has begun a new procedure to make Skills Evaluation Sheets more accessible to certification candidates, evaluators, and instructors. The skill sheets developed by the Certification Division for evaluation of NFPA Standards will now be made available on the Web on the Commission's Home Page at [www.ct.gov/cfpc/](http://www.ct.gov/cfpc/). The first sets that have been posted are the revised Firefighter I and Firefighter II Skill Sheet booklets that address the 2002 edition of NFPA Standard 1001. The booklets are in pdf format and may be downloaded and reproduced for your use. A reminder that all students seeking Firefighter I or II certification must be prepared to accomplish all required skills and should be provided with a complete Skill Sheet Booklet at the beginning of any training program so that they may become familiar with all expectations.

### **Tip of the Quarter**

When preparing students to meet NFPA 1001, Firefighter II objective 6.5.1,

“Preparation of a Preincident Survey “ utilize local facilities in the students response area so that the finalized survey may be submitted to the local Fire Department for inclusion into their pre-fire plans.

## **Q&A**

In each newsletter we will try to answer questions concerning the certification system that we have received and that may have the greatest impact upon the certification process. If you would like to submit a question for this section please send it any member of the Certification Division staff.

### **Question:**

A student in a Firefighter I training program has received poor grades on periodic quizzes that have been given during the program. The program is now completed. Should the instructor sign off on the application for certification testing?

### **Answer:**

Passing scores on locally delivered quizzes during a training program are not required for certification. When given, such quizzes are a tool that an instructor can use to gauge the student's progress. The signature of a certified instructor on an application for a certification examination indicates that the instructor is verifying that the student has been exposed to all objectives of a given Standard. While not specifically stated, the signature also indicates that, in the opinion of the instructor, the student is prepared to sit for the examination. Poor scores on local quizzes may be an indication that the student is not ready to test and requires further training. In that case, it may not be appropriate to sign off on the application until additional training has been delivered.

### **Contact information:**

To submit information for future Newsletters or to ask questions that may be answered in upcoming editions please email any of the following Certification Division staff:

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